

**Approved  
November 24, 2008**

SPECIAL MEETING  
(CONDUCTED AS A COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE)  
OF THE COUNCIL  
CITY OF SOUTHFIELD  
**October 6, 2008**  
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SPECIAL MEETING

(CONDUCTED AS A COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE)

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CITY OF SOUTHFIELD

MINUTES

**October 6, 2008**

The meeting of the Council convened at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Conference Room of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan, with Council President Joan Seymour in the Chair. PRESENT: Council Members: Donald Fracassi, Myron Frasier, Sylvia Jordan, Sidney Lantz, Bill Lattimore, Joan Seymour and Kenson Siver. ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk Nancy Banks, City Administrator James Scharret and Assistant City Attorney Susan Ward-Witkowski. There being a quorum, Council was in session.

The only item on the agenda was the introduction of the Deputy City Administrator.

Mr. Scharret stated that City Council requested that the Deputy City Administrator position, authorized by the City Charter, be filled. The City has a strong candidate for Council to consider for appointment. Frederick Zorn has over twenty years of administrative and executive leadership experience in Southeastern Michigan local government. His career profile reflects a unique blend of city management administrative experience together with leadership responsibilities in community and economic development, including eleven years of increasing responsibility with the City of Taylor, Michigan.

Mr. Zorn's areas of expertise include Budget Management & Administrative Skills and Economic Development/Tax Base Enhancement. He can "hit the ground running" and be an immediate and viable asset to the City of Southfield, especially in regards to meeting the plan requirements of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. The City's potential allotment is \$3.24 million to help fight the effects of the foreclosure crisis. Mr. Zorn is a recognized expert in the development of like programs. This would be his most immediate high priority assignment. Mr. Scharret requested a starting date of October 10, 2008.

In the longer term, Mr. Zorn's administrative skills can be put to use in a number of essential areas including: budget preparation, agenda preparation, management research, special projects, organizational development and strategic planning.

Councilwoman Jordan asked about the selection process.

Val Crump replied that statewide recruitment was done at the request of Council. Six of the sixty-one applicants were interviewed. Two of those interviewed were from out-of-state. Mr. Zorn came out on top of those interviewed.

Council President Seymour stated that if there is a consensus to appoint Mr. Zorn, the item will be moved to tonight's Regular Meeting.

Mr. Zorn stated that he created the Economic Development Department in the City of Taylor. The acquisition of the Villages of Taylor has been nationally recognized. During the past 18 months he completed the City of Taylor's Master Plan, rewrote the dangerous building ordinance, acquired hand held computers for the Building Department, did a housing market analysis with the Housing Commission and worked with HUD on dealing with the foreclosure crisis.

Councilman Siver stated that the Neighborhood Services Committee has been looking at doing a housing index for each neighborhood. Mr. Zorn replied that's why the housing analysis was done. It is important to have a viable product. The City needs to know the character and quality of each neighborhood. The City needs to be out there competing. It is important to the long term economic stability.

Councilman Lattimore stated that Mr. Zorn's background was very impressive. He asked about Section 8 vouchers.

Mr. Zorn replied that the Village of Taylor was a project based on Section 8 vouchers. There were 1100 vouchers. The City tore down 700 units and built new 3 and 4 bedroom units. There has only been one foreclosure on that property. The units were opened up to the five county area. The Housing Choice voucher allows people to live near where they work. Rental units are inspected every three years.

Councilman Lattimore replied that vouchers allow people to go anywhere. The City hasn't had the capacity to service them, particularly when it comes to inspections. Most of the rental units exceed HUD limits. The City is short staffed. Our program is done in-house, not by a Housing Commission. Mr. Zorn replied that the program needs to be reviewed and possibly it can be fixed. Section 8 is not an easy program to administer. The rules change constantly. The Detroit HUD Field Office has come a long way. The Housing Commission is a performance based system for pay. The City needs to look at it as a tool to reach other goals. He is a big believer in training for Housing Commission staff.

Councilwoman Jordan asked Mr. Zorn what makes Southfield unique in his eyes.

Mr. Zorn replied that Southfield has an excellent reputation. He likes the mix of businesses here, the diversity of the community and the great location. He firmly

believes that Oakland County will drive the economy. This position is one of the best jobs in the public sector to become available this year. He turned down the City Manager's position in Ferndale in 2006 because he didn't feel the time was right. He has accomplished what the City of Taylor wanted done.

Councilwoman Jordan asked what challenges he sees Southfield facing and what enables him to handle it. Mr. Zorn responded that global competition impacts what a City does. Every community needs to figure out how to reinvent itself. Southfield is in a strategic location, with a professional staff, strong Fortune 500 companies, and unique neighborhoods. The City has to capitalize on that and ask its corporations to do more. Many times you will find that they are happy to be asked.

Councilman Frasier asked if his experience was with a strong Mayor form of government. Mr. Zorn replied yes. The City of Melvindale was a strong City Clerk form of government. The charter is the guideline and you have to respect that balance.

Councilman Frasier stated that Southfield's charter is unique to most Council-Manager forms of government. A number of appointments in other communities report to an elected official and not to a City Manager. Here you will need to use more influence than leverage. Mr. Zorn responded that he understands he needs to be aware of the roles and respect those boundaries.

The consensus of Council was to approve the appointment of Fred Zorn as Deputy City Administrator. The formal appointment was referred to the Regular Meeting of October 6, 2008.

Mayor Lawrence expressed her support for the appointment.

Councilman Fracassi stated that the City is very fortunate to have Mr. Zorn aboard. The timing is perfect. Mr. Zorn replied that he was excited to be here. The City's reputation from the elected to that of the staff is very well respected. He has heard nothing but positive things about the City.

Councilman Fracassi stated that this is a team and wanted Mr. Zorn to feel comfortable to ask Mayor and Council questions at any time. They are always there for the Administrator. The City needs to move ahead through competent leadership.

There being no further business, the Regular Meeting (conducted as a Committee-of-the-Whole) adjourned at 6:45 p.m., October 6, 2008, until the next Regular Meeting on October 6, 2008, in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building, 26000 Evergreen Road, Southfield, Michigan.

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Joan Seymour, Council President

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Nancy L. M. Banks, City Clerk